

Message Text

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TO ALL EUROPEAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: US POLICY TOWARD EASTERN EUROPE

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF AN ARTICLE WHICH APPEARED IN APRIL 2
WASHINGTON POST UNDER TITLE " 'OFFICIAL' VERSION GIVEN
OF SONNENFELDT TALK." BY BERNARD NOSSITER DATED LONDON,
APRIL 1.

1. BEGIN TEXT: AN "OFFICIAL" SUMMARY OF THE CONTROVER-
SIAL STATEMENT BY STATE DEPARTMENT COUNSELOR HELMUT
SONNENFELDT STRONGLY SUGGESTS THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS
NOT ABANDONED ITS EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE EVENTS IN THE
SOVIET SPHERE.

2. THE 1,000-WORD TEXT APPEARS IN THE CURRENT ISSUE OF
"FOREIGN REPORT," A NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED BY THE ECONOMIST
MAGAZINE.

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3. ACCORDING TO AUTHORITATIVE DIPLOMATIC SOURCES, THE

SUMMARY IS FAITHFUL RENDERING OF SONNENFELDT'S REMARKS AT A DECEMBER BRIEFING HERE OF U.S. AMBASSADORS IN EUROPE.

4. PARTIAL ACCOUNTS OF SONNENFELDT'S COMMENTS, NOTABLY IN COLUMNS BY ROWLAND EVANS AND ROBERT NOVAK, HAVE

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" - - IN WESTERN EUROPE AND ALARM IN TOUCHED OFF A FUROR IN WESTERN EUROPE AND ALARM IN EASTERN EUROPE.

5. THESE VERSIONS INDICATED THAT SONNENFELDT, A CONFIDENT OF SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY A KISSINGER, WAS ENUNCIATING A NEW POLICY IN WHICH THE UNITED STATES WOULD ACQUIESCE IN UNCHECKED SOVIET CONTROL OF ITS SATELLITES.

6. THE SUMMARY PUBLISHED TODAY LEADS TO A MARKEDLY DIFFERENT CONCLUSION, HOWEVER. IT QUOTES SONNENFELDT AS HAVING ARGUED ALONG THESE LINES:

7. THE SOVIET UNION IS BECOMING A GLOBAL SUPERPOWER AND THE U.S. CANNOT STOP THIS, BUT THE UNITED STATES CAN "AFFECT THE WAY IN WHICH POWER IS DEVELOPED AND USED ... WE HAVE TO SEE OUR TASK AS MANAGING OR DOMESTICATING THIS POWER."

8. WASHINGTON WILL DO THIS BY BREAKING DOWN THE SOVIET POLICY OF SELF-RELIANCE, THE SUMMARY SAYS. WE NEED TO DRAW THE SOVIET UNION INTO A SERIES OF DEPENDENCIES AND TIES WITH THE WEST," SONNENFELDT IS QUOTED AS SAYING. ONE EXAMPLE GIVEN IS THE AGREEMENT TO SELL MOSCOW GRAIN. "THAT GIVES US LEVERAGE."

9. IN EASTERN EUROPE, THE SOVIET UNION DOMINATES BY SHEER MILITARY FORCE, THE VERSION PUBLISHED TODAY SAYS. IT HAS NO "GENUINE FRIENDS," EXCEPT PERHAPS BULGARIA. THIS IS "AN UNFORTUNATE HISTORICAL FAILURE BECAUSE EASTERN EUROPE IS WITHIN THEIR SCOPE AND AREA OF NATURAL INTEREST. IT IS DOUBLY TRAGIC THAT IN THIS AREA OF VITAL INTEREST AND CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE IT HAS NOT BEEN POSSIBLE UNCLASSIFIED

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FOR THE SOVIET UNION TO ESTABLISH ROOTS OF INTEREST THAT GO BEYOND SHEER POWER," SONNENFELDT REPORTEDLY SAID.

10. HOWEVER, THE SUMMARY CONTINUES, "IT MUST BE IN OUR LONG-TERM INTEREST TO INFLUENCE EVENTS IN THIS AREA - BECAUSE OF THE PRESENT UNNATURAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIET UNION - SO THAT THEY WILL NOT SOONER OR LATER EXPLODE AND CAUSE WORLD WAR III.

11. "SO OUR POLICY MUST BE THE POLICY OF CLEARLY RESPONDING TO THE VISIBLE ASPIRATIONS IN EASTERN EUROPE FOR A MORE AUTONOMOUS EXISTENCE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF A STRONG SOVIET GEOPOLITICAL INFLUENCE."

12. THE POLICY IS WORKING IN POLAND AND HUNGARY, ACCORDING TO THIS "OFFICIAL" VERSION. "THE POLES HAVE

BEEN ABLE TO OVERCOME THEIR ROMANTIC POLITICAL INCLINATIONS; WHICH LED TO THEIR DISASTERS IN THE PAST," SONNENFELDT REPORTEDLY SAID. IN HUNGARY, PREMIER JANOS KADAR'S "PERFORMANCE HAS BEEN REMARKABLE."

13. "WE HAVE AN INTEREST WHICH BORDERS ON THE VITAL FOR US IN CONTINUING THE INDEPENDENCE OF YUGOSLAVIA FROM SOVIET DOMINATION," ACCORDING TO THE SUMMARY RELEASED TODAY. BELGRADE'S BEHAVIOR MUST CONTINUE TO BE INFLUENCED AND LIMITED BY SOVIET POWER, "BUT ANY SHIFT MADE BY YUGOSLAVIA INTO THE SOVIET ORBIT WOULD REPRESENT A MAJOR STRATEGIC SETBACK FOR THE WEST."

14. THOSE WHO TOOK PART IN THE DECEMBER MEETING HERE SAW NO "SHIFT OR CHANGE OF POLICY IN SONNENFELDT'S OFF-THE-CUFF OBSERVATIONS. ONE PARTICIPANT SAID THE KISSINGER AIDE SPOKE IN A REALISTIC CONTEXT THAT RECOGNIZED THAT WESTERN MILITARY FORCES COULD NOT AND DID NOT MOVE DURING PAST UPRISINGS IN HUNGARY, POLAND AND EAST BERLIN OR DURING THE SOVIET INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN 1968.

15. ONE DIPLOMAT AT THE DECEMBER GATHERING SUMMED UP SONNENFELDT'S REMARKS THIS WAY: U.S. POLICY AIMS AT THE FINLANDIZATION OF EASTERN EUROPE, THE ENCOURAGEMENT

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OF NATIONS LARGELY FREE TO PURSUE THEIR DOMESTIC INTERESTS BUT POSING NO MILITARY THREAT TO THE SOVIET UNION.

16. THE DIPLOMATIC CIRCUIT HERE IS SPECULATING ABOUT THE SOURCES OF THE PARTIAL SONNENFELDT REPORT WITH ITS IMPLICATIONS OF SURRENDER AND SELL-OUT. KISSINGER IS SAID TO BE DISLIKED EVEN WITHIN THE STATE DEPARTMENT FOR WHAT IS DESCRIBED AS HIS UNTRUSTWORTHINESS. SONNENFELDT HIS PROTEGE, IS BELIEVED TO HAVE ANTAGONIZED EVEN MORE DIPLOMATS BY WHAT IS PICTURED AS ABRASIVE CONDUCT. END TEXT. KISSINGER

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